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FCC Mail Room

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March 27, 2013

Marlene H. Dortch  
Office of the Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th St., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of: Nomination for the Universal Service Administrative Company Board of Directors,  
CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45.

Dear Secretary Dortch,

Connected Nation, Inc. respectfully nominates **Raquel R. Noriega** to serve on the USAC Board of Directors. Ms. Noriega is uniquely qualified to serve on this Board, particularly during this period of transition resulting from the reform of the Universal Service Fund and the creation of the Connect America Fund.

Ms. Noriega has more than fourteen years of experience working in telecommunications public policy, both in the US and in Europe. Currently, she is Director of Public Policy at Connected Nation, Inc., where she has served for the last five years.

Connected Nation is a not-for-profit organization working to help ensure that all Americans have access to, as well as the necessary skills, capability, and willingness to connect to high-speed Internet and the multitude of opportunities that stem from this technology. To do so, Connected Nation conducts research that informs and helps shape local, state, and federal broadband public policy. Based on that research, and taking into account evolving federal broadband policy – most notably the reform of the Universal Service Fund, underway at the Commission — Connected Nation helps states, local communities, and an array individual partners (from libraries and community institutions to broadband providers) to develop sound strategies aimed to promote broadband.

Over the last five years, Ms. Noriega has been an integral part of this work at Connected Nation. As part of Connected Nation's Policy and Research Department, Ms. Noriega monitors and assesses federal public policy and helps stakeholders understand the impact of such reforms at the state and local levels. As such, Ms. Noriega understands the vast reform underway regarding the creation of the Connect America Fund and the complexities that this transformation is already imposing upon USAC.

Ms. Noriega has also been instrumental in helping states define sound broadband policy. Following the Commission's lead, states and territories are exploring state-level policy options that will help meet the digital challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Connected Nation has been honored to assist a number of states and territories in developing policies that meet these challenges and complement the vision set by the

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Commission in the National Broadband Plan. Ms. Noriega has been leading these efforts at Connected Nation. In addition, working with the Government of the Territory of Puerto Rico, Ms. Noriega was a key leader in the conceptualization, writing, and execution of the Puerto Rico Broadband Strategic Plan in 2012. At its core, the Puerto Rico plan tackles the challenge of bringing the benefits of advanced telecommunications capability to the economically challenged population of Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rico Broadband Plan carefully considers the impact on the island of the USF reform underway, and prioritizes strategies to promote broadband adoption in the jurisdictions in the nation with the lowest rates of home and mobile broadband adoption.

Ms. Noriega has also been instrumental in undertaking important research conducted at Connected Nation that is directly relevant to the Lifeline USF program and USAC's mission. Connected Nation's research agenda aims to help understand the barriers to broadband adoption and how best to overcome them. Most recently, Ms. Noriega's research has explored the degree to which affordability is a key barrier to adoption among non-broadband users, and what the willingness to pay for the service would be among such price sensitive non-adopters. This research has triggered a working partnership between Connected Nation and the Wireline Competition Bureau working on assessing the reform of the Lifeline USF program to further explore the question of willingness to pay.

Connected Nation is charged with producing state-level broadband maps under the State Broadband Initiative Grant Program in nine states and the territory of Puerto Rico. This tactical information is critical for the implementation of the Connect America Fund. Ms. Noriega helps assess the impact of the National Broadband Map and its implications for the Connect America Fund. Such knowledge and experience should prove very useful to the USAC Board as it tackles implementation of the changes in the High-Cost USF Program.

Prior to joining Connected Nation, Ms. Noriega was Senior Economist at the Foundation for Regulatory Studies, based in Madrid, Spain. In this position, Ms. Noriega was responsible for assessing ongoing telecommunications public policy in Spain and the European Union at large. While holding this position, Ms. Noriega published a number of research pieces, most notably she co-authored the publication "The New Role of the State in Regulated Sectors: Broadband Telecommunications," which won the 2004 Premio Ensayo of the DMR Consulting Foundation. Prior to that, Ms. Noriega served as Senior Economist at LECG, Inc., an economic consulting firm, where she provided consulting services to private and public telecommunications clients in the US, Latin America, and Europe.

Ms. Noriega holds a Masters in Economics from Northwestern University, where she also was admitted to the Ph.D. candidacy (All But Dissertation), and a BA in Economics from the University of Michigan. Ms. Noriega is bilingual, speaking fluently both Spanish and English.



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Connected Nation believes that Ms. Noriega is amply qualified to serve on the USAC Board of Directors. Ms. Noriega's broad experience in matters of telecommunications policy, her research background, and her knowledge and experience working as part of a not-for-profit entity like Connected Nation, dedicated to helping bridge the digital divide, gives her a unique perspective that will strengthen the USAC Board as it implements the complex reform of the Universal Service Fund over the coming years.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask that you consider Ms. Noriega to serve in the USAC Board of Directors. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance as you evaluate her candidacy.

Many thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Thomas Ferree  
President and COO  
Connected Nation, Inc.

Attachment

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FCC Mail Room

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**RAQUEL R. NORIEGA**

1312 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Apt. 209  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
+1.202.374.7656  
[RNoriega@ConnectedNation.Org](mailto:RNoriega@ConnectedNation.Org)

- Information and Communications Technology policy expert with over 14 years of experience in policy and regulatory advocacy.
- Broad experience working with national and state-level stakeholders to better understand the challenges of digital inclusion in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and define sound broadband policy.
- Expert regarding the challenges barring vulnerable Americans from partaking in the digital opportunity of broadband, and effective programs that help overcome these barriers.

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**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**CONNECTED NATION, INC.**

A not-for-profit organization working to close the digital divide across America  
[www.connectednation.org](http://www.connectednation.org)

Washington, D.C.  
2008 to present

**Director Public Policy**

- Founding member of a small team of policy experts that monitors and assesses the strategic impact of reforms in telecommunications policy underway at the FCC, the Department of Commerce, or U.S. Congress.
- Provides policy advice to state governments and other stakeholders regarding state broadband policy, and the state-level impact of federal policy under reform.
- Supports state governments in developing broadband strategic plans that complement federal policy underway.
- Lead and support state and territorial governments in developing broadband strategic plans, including the first such plans in Puerto Rico and Iowa.
- Develops and sustains national and local public and private partnerships that support data-driven initiatives to close gaps in broadband access, adoption and use.
- Co-author of multiple Connected Nation Policy Briefs examining developments in federal policy affecting broadband expansion. Available at <http://www.connectednation.org/data-center-policy>
- Co-author of multiple Connected Nation comments at the FCC and Department of Commerce regarding public policies that support Connected Nation's goals, as well as descriptions of Connected Nation's state and local research and findings to policymakers and the public. Available at <http://www.connectednation.org/data-center-policy>

**INDEPENDENT MEDIA AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY CONSULTANT**

2006 - 2007

- Provided policy and economic consulting services on media and telecommunications policy and antitrust and regulation matters.

**FUNDACIÓN DE ESTUDIOS DE REGULACIÓN** (Foundation for Regulatory Studies)  
**Senior Economist**

Madrid, Spain  
2002 to 2005

- Senior fellow in charge of tracking and evaluating strategic and regulatory trends in the telecommunications sector.
- Monitored and assessed the impact of Spanish and European telecommunications reform during a period of technological convergence and transformation under the European 2002 new electronic communications Regulatory Framework.
- Provided strategic advice to the office of corporate strategy, institutional relations and regulatory affairs of Telefónica Corporation, addressing policy issues affecting the firm in Spain and the European Union.

**LECG, Inc.**  
**Senior Economist**

London, U.K. 1999-2002  
Chicago, U.S.A. 1998-  
1999

- Economic consultant offering strategic advice and analyses on issues relating to telecommunications regulation and public policy in the US, the UK, and Latin America.
- Selected consulting engagements: Ameritech (USA), Atlantic Energy Distribution Corporation (Argentina), Post Office Users National Council (UK), Qualcomm/Pegaso (Mexico), Superintendencia de Telecomunicaciones de Guatemala (Telecommunications Regulator), Telecom Argentina (Argentina), and British Telecom, Vodafone, BTCellnet/O2, Orange & One2One (UK).

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**EDUCATION**

**Northwestern University**

Admitted to Ph.D. Candidacy (ABD)

Master of Arts and Sciences, Economics

Awarded a competitive scholarship from the Bank of Spain to finance graduate studies

1996

1995

**University of Michigan**

Bachelor of Arts and Sciences, Economics (*with distinction*)

1992

**SELECTED RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS**

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- *Let's Make a Deal: Price Sensitivity and Willingness to Pay in the American Broadband Market*, with McGovern and Koutsky. 2012. [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2033415](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2033415)
- *Late to the Party: How New Broadband Subscribers Compare to Early Adopters*, with McGovern, Joshi, and Walker. 2011. [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1995130](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1995130)[http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1995130](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1995130)
- *Digital Inclusion Strategies that Work: the Connected Nation Experience*, Regulatory and Economic Policy in Telecommunications, Telefonica España, Num. 5, September 2010.
- *Nuevo Papel del Estado en Sectores Regulados: Las Telecomunicaciones de Banda Ancha*, with Ariño and de la Cuétara, 2005 Ediciones Deusto, Spain.
- *Liberalization and Competition in the Telecommunications Sector: 1998-2003*, with Ariño. In *Privatizations and Liberalizations in Spain: Assessment and Results 1996-2003*. 2004, Comares Editorial, Spain.
- *Structural Separation in the Telecommunications Sector*, REDETI Review of Telecommunications and Network Infrastructure Law, April 2003.

**RESEARCH SUPPORTING CONNECTED NATION'S MISSION AND ENGAGEMENTS:**

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- Co-author of multiple Connected Nation Policy Briefs examining developments in federal policy affecting broadband expansion. Available at <http://www.connectednation.org/data-center-policy>
- Puerto Rico Broadband Strategic Plan, 2012. <http://www.connectpr.org/strategic-plan>
- The Broadband Landscape in the State of Texas: Assessment at a State, Regional and Local Level, and Recommendations for Expansion, 2011. [http://www.connectedtx.org/sites/default/files/connected-nation/Texas/ctx\\_planning\\_report\\_final\\_web.pdf](http://www.connectedtx.org/sites/default/files/connected-nation/Texas/ctx_planning_report_final_web.pdf)
- Iowa Broadband: Current Market Analysis & Initial Recommendations for Acceleration of Iowa's Broadband Market, 2010. <http://www.connectiowa.org/sites/default/files/connected-nation/iowa/connectiowabroadbandanalysis082010final.pdf>

**SELECTED SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS**

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- Connecting Puerto Rico: Puerto Rico Broadband Taskforce Briefing, Sponsored by Congressman Pierluisi, US Congress, June 5, 2012.
- Iowa Broadband: Current Market Analysis and Recommendations for Acceleration of Iowa's Broadband Market, A presentation to the Iowa Broadband Deployment Governance Board, August, 2010.
- Federal Communications Commission's National Broadband Plan Staff Workshop, Programmatic Efforts to Increase Broadband Adoption and Usage – What Works and What Doesn't? August, 2009.
- NTCA & OPASTCO IT Possibilities Annual Conference – USF for Broadband: Where do we stand?, April 2009.

- Alliance for Public Technology seminar – From Deployment to Employment: Broadband Challenges and Opportunities Surrounding Implementation of the Stimulus Package, March 2009.
- USTelecom Webinar – Broadband Grants and Loans: What You Need to Know, March 2009.
- Information Technology & Innovation Foundation – United States Congress Briefing, Crafting an Effective Broadband Stimulus Package, February 2009.
- National States Geographic Information Council’s mid-year conference. Technology in the 21st Century; Perspectives on the benefits, methods and industry of Broadband deployment and mapping, February 2009.

**OTHER**

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- Bilingual in Spanish and English.
- Proficient in French.

*March 2013*